

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
LAREDO DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

GREGORIO GONZALEZ-BARRAGAN

§
§
§
§
§

CRIMINAL NO. 5:21-CR-01700-03

FACTUAL STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PLEA AGREEMENT

The United States of America, by and through Jennifer B. Lowery, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Texas and José Angel Moreno, Assistant United States Attorney, and the defendant, **GREGORIO GONZALEZ-BARRAGAN**, and the defendant's counsel, hereby stipulate as follows:

I.

If this case proceeded to trial, the United States of America would prove each element of the offense beyond a reasonable doubt. The following facts, among others, would be offered to establish the Defendant's guilt:

II.

DEA Special Agents (SAs) and Laredo Police Department (LPD) Investigators met with an LPD Confidential Source (CS) on September 11, 2021 regarding a murder for hire plot. The CS advised them that there were three (3) hitmen in Laredo, Texas ready to kill G.G.T. The CS provided the SAs and Investigators telephone number 956-629-1426 as the number for one of the hitmen. The CS told the SAs and Investigators that the Cartel Del Noreste (CDN) solicited the CS to coordinate with the hitmen involved in the murder for hire plot.

The CS related that the CS contacted via Facebook Messenger by a co-conspirator known as "Tocayo" on September 7, 2021. The CS then called Tocayo via Facebook Messenger and

spoke to him. Tocayo told the CS that "the man" (who the CS understood to be Juan Cisneros-Trevino, a.k.a. "Juanito" because Tocayo works directly for him) wanted the CS to help with something. Tocayo asked the CS to meet Tocayo at the Whataburger on Calton Road. The CS went to the Whataburger and met with Tocayo in the parking lot. During the meeting, Tocayo asked the CS to coordinate the kidnapping or murder of a subject known as "Tico", who Tocayo and the CS know to be G.G.T. The CS stated that Cisneros-Trevino wanted G.G.T. because G.G.T. had allegedly stolen 40 to 50 kilograms of cocaine from Cisneros-Trevino, profiting from that cocaine and then smuggling more cocaine through Nuevo Laredo without paying for permission (piso). Cisneros-Trevino is the second-in-command for the CDN. The CS then got into a truck driven by Tocayo, and they left the parking lot. Tocayo drove to downtown Laredo and stopped near the Metro Bus terminal on Hidalgo street, where Tocayo met a man who gave Tocayo three cell phones.

Tocayo and the CS then traveled in Tocayo's vehicle to meet with two hitmen (sicarios) at the corner of Springfield and Ash in Laredo, Texas. The two men were later identified as Rodolfo REYNA-Zapata and **Gregorio GONZALEZ-Barragan**. During the meeting, Tocayo gave REYNA-Zapata and **GONZALEZ-Barragan** a cell phone each. Tocayo informed them that the CS would be their point of contact and that the CS would get them a vehicle and the "toys" (firearms).

Tocayo drove the CS back to the Whataburger parking lot. On the ride back, Tocayo told the CS that REYNA-Zapata and **GONZALEZ-Barragan** knew why they were in Laredo, Texas. Tocayo told the CS that G.G.T. had money and drugs in his house and that Tocayo wanted G.G.T., the drugs, and the money. Tocayo told the CS that the CS could keep \$40,000 from the money in the house, and if there was no cash, the CS could keep the drugs, and the CS' debts with the CDN

would be forgiven. Prior to dropping off the CS, Tocayo handed the CS a piece of paper with an address and told the CS that the CS could pick up the guns there between 3:00 and 5:00 pm. Tocayo also gave the CS \$1,000 for expenses.

On September 11, 2021, based on this intelligence, the agents asked the CS to make a recorded call to the hitman using telephone number 956-629-1426. During the call, the CS asked the sicario, later identified as REYNA-Zapata, if the plan was to kidnap or kill G.G.T. REYNA-Zapata replied that he was ready to do whatever the CS wanted. REYNA-Zapata also added that if they wanted G.G.T. killed, that was even better. The CS told REYNA-Zapata that the CS would obtain guidance and get back to REYNA-Zapata.

On September 12, 2021, at approximately 4:12 p.m., the CS called REYNA-Zapata to check on any word from REYNA-Zapata's end. REYNA-Zapata informed the CS that no one had called REYNA-Zapata back. REYNA-Zapata asked the CS to call and see if they would respond to the CS.

At approximately 4:32 p.m., the CS contacted Tocayo. During the call the CS informed Tocayo that the group was unsure whether they were supposed to kill G.G.T. in Laredo or take him back to Nuevo Laredo. Tocayo interrupted the CS and stated, "Look, you're going to do this ... if they can grab him, they're going to grab him, and if not, then do it and not leave any witnesses. And bring back everything that is there. That's the objective." When the CS informed Tocayo that the hitmen wanted a driver, Tocayo asked, "And the 'old guy', what's he there for?" Based on the investigation, Agents believe this was a reference to Juan Antonio MARTINEZ-Padilla.

On September 13, 2021, at approximately 2:41 p.m., the CS called REYNA-Zapata to relay the orders the CS received from Tocayo. REYNA-Zapata confirmed that they would take victim or kill him. The CS told REYNA-Zapata that the CS would soon swing by to pick up all three of

them, so the CS could turn over the car with the guns already inside. The CS asked what type of weapons they were going to want, and REYNA-Zapata stated, "two long ones and two short ones." The CS and REYNA-Zapata spoke again briefly a bit later to check, and the CS told REYNA-Zapata that he was almost on the way.

At 4:37 p.m., the CS called REYNA-Zapata again. During the call, REYNA-Zapata informed the CS that REYNA-Zapata had had it with MARTINEZ-Padilla because he was just complaining that no one was giving him money and they were just going round and round. REYNA-Zapata asked the CS to talk to MARTINEZ-Padilla. The CS told REYNA-Zapata to just hold on there, and the CS would be there soon.

At 4:45 p.m., the CS called REYNA-Zapata one last time to see what MARTINEZ-Padilla wanted. REYNA-Zapata passed the phone to MARTINEZ-Padilla. MARTINEZ-Padilla complained that he just there with nothing, not even a place to sleep or money to eat. MARTINEZ-Padilla claimed he was only given \$100 about 5 days ago. MARTINEZ-Padilla stated that he's always been ready for anything and has the balls for it, but they don't even have a car to move around in. The CS assures MARTINEZ-Padilla that he would be there in 40-45 minutes so they can pick up the car with the weapons.

At approximately 5:00 p.m., DEA SAs staged an undercover vehicle at the parking lot of Academy Sports and Outdoors located on International Blvd and Loop 20 which contained the firearms in the trunk of the car, extending into the rear seat of the car. DEA then set up surveillance around the parking lot and the car.

At approximately 5:35 p.m., the DEA's air wing followed the CS to a store located on East Plum Street where the CS picked up REYNA-Zapata, MARTINEZ-Padilla, and **GONZALEZ-Barragan**. At approximately 6:15 p.m., SAs observed the CS arrive at the parking lot and park

one space away from the UC car. Surveillance saw REYNA-Zapata exit the front passenger side of the CS's car and approach the gas cap of the UC car to retrieve the keys. MARTINEZ-Padilla and **GONZALEZ-Barragan** exited the UC car and opened the doors to the UC car to enter the UC car. As REYNA-Zapata entered the car, LPD SWAT converged on the UC car and arrested MARTINEZ-Padilla, but REYNA-Zapata and **GONZALEZ-Barragan** attempted to flee on foot. The two were apprehended a short distance away by DEA. DEA and LPD then recovered the firearms from the UC car.

DEA also seized four cell phones: a Blu-B100DL cell phone 956-615-4893 from the CS; a Blu-B100DL cell phone 956-629-1426 from REYNA-Zapata; a Blu-B100DL cell phone 956-602-9251 from **GONZALEZ-Barragan**; and a Samsung cell phone 956-294-4372 from REYNA-Zapata. Agents noted that the CS, **GONZALEZ-Barragan**, and REYNA-Zapata had the exact same "BLU" brand cellphones, all registered with T-Mobile, and only each other's phone numbers programmed in the phones. All three subjects were then transported to DEA for processing and interviews.

MARTINEZ-Padilla told the agents he had no information to provide. **GONZALEZ-Barragan** claimed he had come to Laredo to take a truck back to Nuevo Laredo. He also stated that he had crossed about two days before to find work and was staying with a female friend. However, he didn't know where the friend lived. He claimed he came over with only \$100. **GONZALEZ-Barragan** stated that he accepted a contract to come over to Laredo to take a vehicle to Nuevo Laredo.

REYNA-Zapata claimed he was asked to retrieve a truck from Laredo for \$200. He stated he knew he was going to take a vehicle with guns and money back to Nuevo Laredo. REYNA-Zapata told the agents that the "big guy" (referring to the CS) was the one who told REYNA-

Zapata they would be taking someone to Nuevo Laredo. REYNA-Zapata then said that he suspected that the person who contracted him, was part of the CDN. REYNA-Zapata claimed he was only paid \$200 to come for the money, vehicle, and guns.

REYNA-Zapata later stated that MARTINEZ-Padilla, **GONZALEZ-Barragan**, and he were taken to a house in a wooded area in Nuevo Laredo by "Paco". There, REYNA-Zapata was told to come to the United States to take the vehicle, money, and drugs to Nuevo Laredo. He claimed that all three were contracted for the same job. REYNA-Zapata later stated that the "big guy" (referring to the CS) was the one who told them to kill the victim. He admitted that when he said over the phone that he was going to call his command, he meant he was going to call "Paco".

Defendant, **GREGORIO GONZALEZ-BARRAGAN**, hereby confesses and judicially admits that between on or about **September 7, 2021, and continuing at least to on or about September 13, 2021**, he knowingly **conspired to kidnap**, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1201(a)(1) & 1201(c) and that on or about **September 13, 2021**, he knowingly **possessed a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime**, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A) and 2.

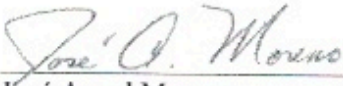
LGG B

GREGORIO GONZALEZ-BARRAGAN
Defendant


APPROVED:

JENNIFER B. LOWERY
ACTING UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

By:



José Angel Moreno
Assistant United States Attorney
Southern District of Texas
Telephone: (956) 723-6523
Email: Angel.Moreno@usdoj.gov



Roberto Balli
Attorney for Defendant